

**MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST
DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY FORM**

NR Eligible: yes ☒
no ☐

Property Name: National Road Mile Marker Inventory Number: AL-V-B-346
Address: NW Intersection of LaVale Street and National Highway (ALT US 40) Historic district: yes ☒ no ☐
City: LaVale Zip Code: 21502 County: Allegany
USGS Quadrangle(s): Cumberland
Property Owner: Maryland State Highway Administration Tax Account ID Number: N/A
Tax Map Parcel Number(s): N/A Tax Map Number: N/A
Project: ALT US 40: Streetscape Improvements, LaVale Agency: Maryland State Highway Administration
Agency Prepared By: A.D. Marble & Company
Preparer's Name: Barbara Frederick/Emma Young Date Prepared: 3/27/2006
Documentation is presented in: _____
Preparer's Eligibility Recommendation: X Eligibility recommended _____ Eligibility not recommended _____
Criteria: X A B X C D Considerations: A B C D E F G
Complete if the property is a contributing or non-contributing resource to a NR district/property:
Name of the District/Property: _____
Inventory Number: _____ Eligible: yes no Listed: yes no
Site visit by MHT Staff yes X no Name: _____ Date: _____

Description of Property and Justification: *(Please attach map and photo)*

The National Road mile marker, located at the northwest corner of the intersection of the National Highway (ALT US 40) and LaVale Street, is situated on the north shoulder of the National Highway (ALT US 40) in LaVale, Allegany County, Maryland. The mile marker consists of two cast iron plates, measuring approximately four-and-one-half feet high with a one-half-inch thickness, joined together to form a faux obelisk with a pointed pyramidion. The marker measures approximately one foot wide at the base, and stands in relatively good condition.

Considering their proximity to Cumberland, the National Road mile markers located in LaVale were most likely placed during the mid-nineteenth-century realignment of the National Road through LaVale, shortly after the initial construction of cast iron mile posts, ca. 1835 to 1840. The National Road mile marker located at the northwest corner of the intersection of the National Highway (ALT US 40) and LaVale Street stands as a testament to the post-1833 path of the National Road through Western Maryland. (For a detailed architectural description, history, and list of references, see the Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties form, AL-V-B-346, on file at the Maryland Historical Trust, Crownsville, Maryland).

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST REVIEW

Eligibility recommended X Eligibility not recommended

Criteria: X A B X C D Considerations: A B C D E F G

MHT Comments:

Ann Johnson
Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services

Blair
Reviewer, National Register Program

5/26/06
Date

5/29/06
Date

200601247

Significance Evaluation

The National Road mile maker located at the northwest corner of the intersection of the National Highway (ALT US 40) and LaVale Street currently is in good condition. The mile marker continues to convey its original use as a signpost for highway travelers prior to the introduction of standardized road signs.

The quality of significance in American history, architecture, archeology, engineering, and culture is present in districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association, and:

- A. that are associated with events that have made a significant contribution the broad patterns of our history; or
- B. that are associated with the lives of significant persons in our past; or
- C. that embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or
- D. that have yielded or may be likely to yield information important in history or prehistory.

The National Road mile marker located at the northwest corner of the intersection of the National Highway (ALT US 40) and LaVale Street is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A as an example of a physical attestation to the post-1833 path of the National Road and its mid-nineteenth-century signposts. The mile marker, once one of 131, provided direction to travelers along this major east-west highway stretching westward through Maryland.

The mile marker is not eligible under Criterion B, as it has no known association with individuals of local historical importance.

The mile marker is eligible under Criterion C, as it conveys its original form as a faux obelisk National Road mile marker. The distinctive National Road mile marker, though once fairly common, is now rare, and the National Road mile marker located at the northwest corner of the intersection of the National Highway (ALT US 40) and LaVale Street retains the original form and style of the cast iron faux obelisk.

The mile marker was not evaluated for eligibility under Criterion D as part of the current investigation.

The mile marker retains structural integrity from the period of significance with no alterations and modifications that detract from the integrity of the mile marker. Minor development along the National Highway (ALT US 40) has somewhat compromised the mile marker's integrity of setting. The marker sits atop a modern gravel stone bed, which suggests the object's relocation; still, the marker retains its location along the roadside that it has served for over 150 years. The mile marker retains integrity of design, materials, workmanship, association, and feeling.

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST REVIEW

Eligibility recommended _____

Eligibility not recommended _____

Criteria: ___ A ___ B ___ C ___ D Considerations: ___ A ___ B ___ C ___ D ___ E ___ F ___ G

MHT Comments:

Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services_____
Date_____
Reviewer, National Register Program_____
Date

National Road Mile Marker

AL-V-B-346

Northwest Intersection of LaVale Street and National Highway (ALT US 40), LaVale

Ca. 1840

Public

The cast-iron faux obelisk mile marker was most likely placed during the mid-nineteenth-century realignment of the National Road through LaVale, shortly after the initial construction of cast iron mile posts, ca. 1835-1840. The National Road mile marker is a physical attestation to the post-1833 path of the National Road and its mid-nineteenth-century signposts. The mile marker provided direction to travelers along this major east-west highway stretching westward through Maryland.

Maryland Historical Trust

Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. AL-V-B-346

1. Name of Property

National Road Mile Marker

historic

National Road Mile Marker

other

2. Location

street and number NW intersection of LaVale Street and National Highway (ALT US 40) not for publication

city, town

LaVale

vicinity

county

Allegany

3. Owner of Property

(give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name

Maryland State Highway Administration

street and number

707 North Calvert Street

telephone

(410) 545-0300

city, town

LaVale

state

MD

zip code

21202

4. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. N/A

liber

folio

city, town

tax map

tax parcel

tax ID number

5. Primary Location of Additional Data

- ☐ Contributing Resource in National Register District
☐ Contributing Resource in Local Historic District
☐ Determined Eligible for the National Register/Maryland Register
☐ Determined Ineligible for the National Register/Maryland Register
☐ Recorded by HABS/HAER
☐ Historic Structure Report or Research Report at MHT
☐ Other: _____

6. Classification

Category	Ownership	Current Function	Resource Count
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	Contributing
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce/trade	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> defense	buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> site		<input type="checkbox"/> domestic	sites
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> object		<input type="checkbox"/> education	structures
		<input type="checkbox"/> funerary	objects
		<input type="checkbox"/> government	Total
		<input type="checkbox"/> health care	
		<input type="checkbox"/> industry	
		<input type="checkbox"/> landscape	
		<input type="checkbox"/> recreation/culture	
		<input type="checkbox"/> religion	
		<input type="checkbox"/> social	
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> transportation	
		<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	
		<input type="checkbox"/> unknown	
		<input type="checkbox"/> vacant/not in use	
		<input type="checkbox"/> other:	

Number of Contributing Resources
previously listed in the Inventory

7. Description

Inventory No. AL-V-B-346

Condition

<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> altered

Prepare both a one paragraph summary and a comprehensive description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

The National Road mile marker, located at the northwest corner of the intersection of the National Highway (ALT US 40) and LaVale Street, is situated on the north shoulder of the National Highway (ALT US 40) in LaVale, Allegany County, Maryland.

Description

The mile marker consists of two cast iron plates, measuring approximately four-and-one-half feet high with a one-half-inch thickness, joined together to form a faux obelisk with a pointed pyramidion. The marker is painted white and measures approximately one foot wide at the base. A thick modern wood post is situated at the rear (north) of the marker for support. The marker sits atop a gravel stone bed.

Distance information is bonded to the iron plates on the east and west sides and results in inset lettering. Each line of lettering is situated in the center of the iron plate on the east and west sides. Located approximately two feet above ground level, the west side of the marker reads in bold lettering, painted black in color:

4
To
Cumberland

The east side of the marker reads, in bold black lettering:

127
To
Wheeling

to
Frostburgh
7

The modern, rear post of wood replaced the original, rounded iron bar that once held the marker securely in place (Brusca 2003: 46). In addition, the gravel stone bed suggests that the mile marker was moved, perhaps during the 1940s after the demise of the streetcar line through LaVale necessitated the realignment of the National Highway (ALT US 40). Despite these minor alterations, the mile marker is in good condition.

Surrounding Landscape

The mile marker is sited on the north shoulder of the National Highway (ALT US 40) in the town of LaVale. The mile marker sits on a gravel stone bed surrounded by a grassy lawn, directly west of the northern entrance to LaVale Street. The property located at 705 National Highway (ALT US 40) bounds the marker to the north and the property located at 707 National Highway (ALT US 40) borders the marker to the west. LaVale Street lies to the east of the marker and the National Highway is situated to the south.

8. Significance

Inventory No. AL-V-B-346

Period	Areas of Significance	Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> health/medicine	<input type="checkbox"/> performing arts	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> invention	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-1999	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment/ recreation	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion	
<input type="checkbox"/> 2000-	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> ethnic heritage	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science	
	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/ settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> social history	
	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning		<input type="checkbox"/> maritime history	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> transportation	
	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation		<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other: _____	

Specific dates Unknown

Architect/Builder Unknown

Construction dates Ca. 1835-1840

Evaluation for:

☒ National Register

☐ Maryland Register

☐ not evaluated

Prepare a one-paragraph summary statement of significance addressing applicable criteria, followed by a narrative discussion of the history of the resource and its context. (For compliance projects, complete evaluation on a DOE Form – see manual.)

National Highway

This mile marker is one of only two National Road mile markers located between Cupler/Campground Road and the bridge over Braddock Run in LaVale. The National Road, known today as the National Highway (ALT US 40), was America's first interstate highway and winds for 750 miles through six states.

In 1806, under the Jefferson Administration, Congress authorized the building of the National Road, the first federally funded internal improvement in the United States. Construction began in 1811 out of Cumberland, Maryland, and the road followed Braddock's Road, a rough wagon track established by pioneers and traders and traveled by General Braddock in 1754. By 1818, the National Road reached the Ohio River at Wheeling, which at that time was in Virginia.¹ Eventually, the road pushed through central Ohio, Indiana, and reached Vandalia, Illinois, in the 1830s. The roadway opened the Ohio River Valley and the Midwest for settlement and commerce.

In 1833 to 1834, the section of the road leading west out of Cumberland was re-routed off the old Braddock Road through the area that is now known as LaVale. However, by the end of the decade, construction ceased due to a lack of funds, and the ownership of the road was turned over to the states through which it passed.²

The National Road experienced a remarkable increase in traffic as the region and nation expanded throughout the nineteenth century. It was reported that by 1835, stagecoaches, Conestoga wagons, horses, mules, and foot traffic poured through the Cumberland area via the National Road.³ Throughout the next decade, the National Road was used by thousands of pioneers and gold seekers on their westward journey. However, by the end of the nineteenth century, the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad would cross Allegany County, encouraging travelers to take the train instead of traveling by horse, wagon, or foot on the National Road.

In the early twentieth century, the invention of the automobile caused a resurgence in road travel, and again, the National Road was used as the primary east-west route to the Midwest. The Federal Highway Act of 1921 established a program of federal aid to encourage states to build "an adequate and connected system of highways, interstate in character."⁴ By the mid 1920s, the grid system of numbering highways was in place and created US Route 40 in the roadbed of the National Road. Today, the National Highway, as

¹ Fort Necessity Battlefield Website; accessible from www.nps.gov/fone/classroom/nr3teacher.htm; accessed 14 March 2006.

² Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form, LaVale Toll Gate Posts, AL-V-B-001, Form on file at the Maryland Historical Trust, Crownsville, MD.

³ Whetzel. "Trolleys: The Forgotten Rail Lines of Allegany County." *Mountain Discoveries*, page 14.

⁴ Fort Necessity Battlefield Website; accessible from www.nps.gov/fone/classroom/nr3teacher.htm; accessed 14 March 2006.

Maryland Historical Trust

Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. AL-V-B-346

Name National Road Mile Marker
Continuation Sheet

Number 8 Page 1

the National Road is now known throughout Allegany County, stretches through LaVale as ALT US 40. The road primarily operates as a secondary east-west thoroughfare to the Midwest.

National Road Mile Markers

When Congress authorized the building of the National Road in 1806, it mandated that the roadway be marked with milestones. Prior to the automobile era, mile markers were highly functional. First, they provided distance information to cities and towns. Second, they offered directions at important crossroads. Third, mile markers provided means for calculating postage and freight rates.

The National Road's first mile markers were set in the late-eighteenth century west of Baltimore along MD Route 144, the path that would eventually form the first leg of the National Road. These first mile markers were made of locally quarried granite and limestone. However, the road that stretched between Cumberland and Wheeling was aligned with two different styles of mile markers. The road builders first used stone markers on the road, but in 1835, iron interests in Pennsylvania convinced the road engineers to replace the stone mile markers west of Cumberland with cast iron mileposts.

A total of 131 cast iron mile markers were placed at one mile intervals between Cumberland and Wheeling. Of the original 131 cast iron mile markers, about one-third survived into the twentieth century.⁵ However, with the intensive road building of the mid-twentieth century, many mile markers succumbed to development, and the number of markers remaining today is unknown.

Considering their proximity to Cumberland, the National Road mile markers located in LaVale were most likely placed during the mid-nineteenth-century realignment of the National Road through LaVale, shortly after the initial construction of cast iron mile posts, ca. 1835 to 1840. The National Road mile marker located at the northwest corner of the intersection of the National Highway (ALT US 40) and LaVale Street stands as a testament to the post-1833 path of the National Road through Western Maryland.

⁵ Brusca, Frank. "Our National Road." American Road [Internet]; available from www.mockturtlepress.com/arpieces/ARv1n1_45-48.pdf; accessed 10 March 2006; page 48.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Inventory No. AL-V-B-346

Brusca, Frank. "Our National Road." American Road [Internet]; available from www.mockturtlepress.com/arpieces/ARv1n1_45-48.pdf; accessed 10 March 2006.

Fort Necessity Battlefield Website; accessible from www.nps.gov/fone/classroom/nr3teacher.htm; accessed 14 March 2006.

Raitz, Karl, ed. *The National Road*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, c. 1996.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of surveyed property Not applicable
Acreage of historical setting Not applicable
Quadrangle name Cumberland

Quadrangle scale: 1:24,000

Verbal boundary description and justification

The proposed National Register boundary for the mile marker is the footprint of the marker, measuring approximately one foot wide and one foot deep at the base. The marker sits in a grassy area on the north shoulder of the National Highway (ALT US 40). This boundary encompasses all of the historic features of the object that directly contribute to its significance, as is required by *Defining Boundaries for National Register Properties* (National Park Service 1997).

11. Form Prepared by

name/title	Barbara Frederick, Emma Young		
organization	A.D. Marble & Company	date	March 27, 2006
street & number	10989 Red Run Blvd., Suite 209	telephone	(410) 902-1421
city or town	Owings Mills	state	MD

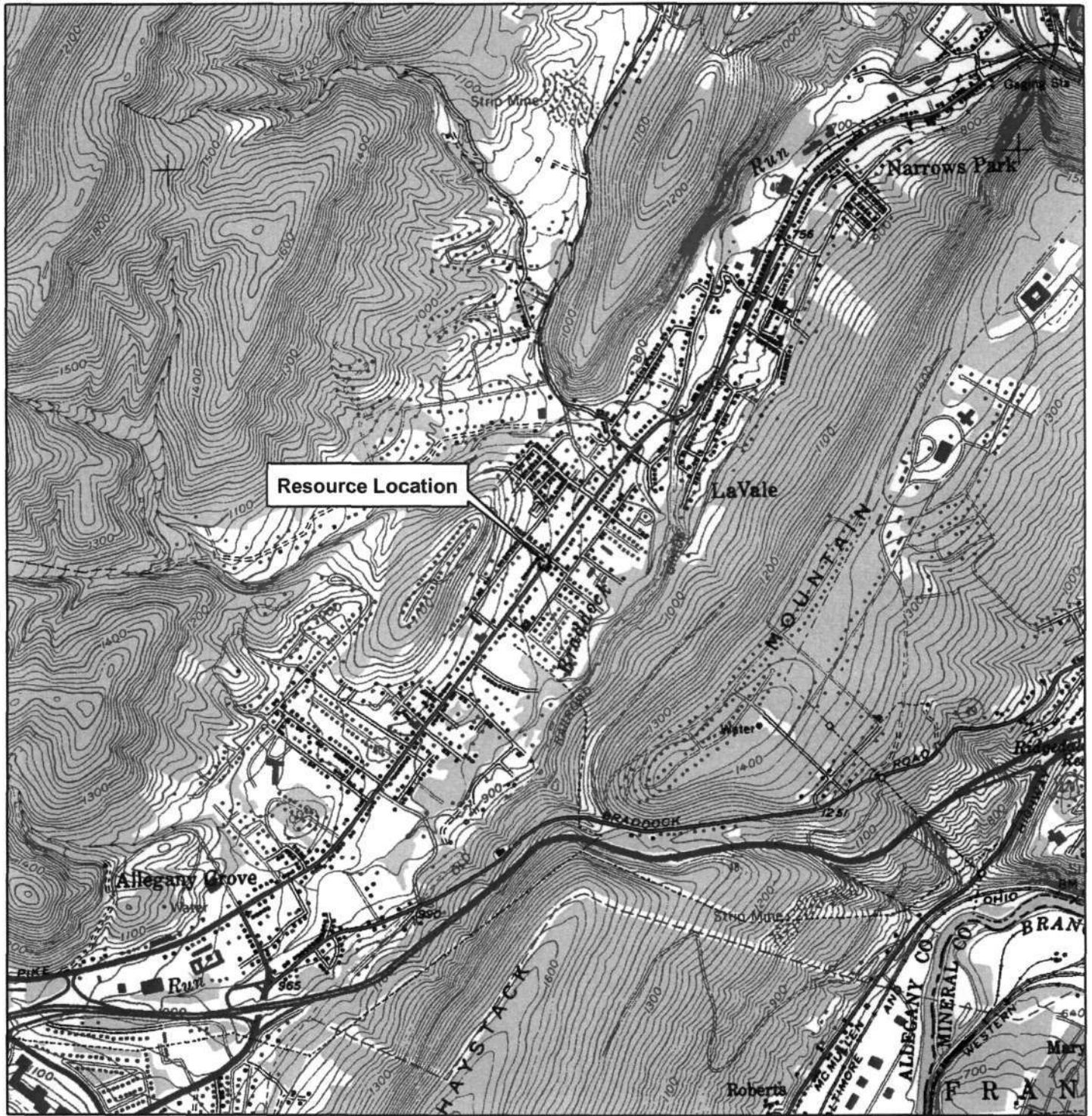
The Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to: Maryland Historical Trust
DHCD/DHCP
100 Community Place
Crownsville, MD 21032-2023
410-514-7600

National Road Mile Marker, NW Intersection of LaVale Street and National Highway (AL-V-B-346)

ALT US 40 Streetscape Improvements
LaVale, Allegany County, Maryland



2,000 0 2,000 Feet



Sources: USGS 7.5' Topographic Quadrangle,
National Elevation Dataset, ESRI



4

TO

Cumberland

127

TO

WHEELING

to

Frostburgh

7

ALV-B-346

National Road Mile Marker, NW intersection of
Lavale Street and National Hwy (Alt US 40)

Allegany County, MD

B. Fredenick

03.2006

MD SHPO

view to North

1/4

4
TO
Cumberland

FAITH
PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH

CHURCH

AL-V-B-346

National Road Mile Marker, NW intersection of Lavale
Street & National Hwy (ALT US 40)

Allegany County, MD

B. Fredenick

03.2006

MD SHPO

West side; view to east

2/4



127
TO
WHEELING
to
Frostburg
7

AL-V-B-346

National Road Mile Marker, NW intersection of
Lavae Street & National Hwy (ALT US 40)

Allegany County, MD

B. Fredenck

03.2006

MD SHPO

east side; view to west

3/4



AL-V-B-346

National Road Mile Marker, NW intersection of LaVale
Street & National Hwy (ALT US 40)

Allegany County, MD

B. Fredenick

03.2006

MD SHPO

Rear (north) side; view to south

4/4